

## Great Stories of the Bible - 05/01/22

### The Good Samaritan

**TEXT- Luke 10:25-37** *And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? . . .*

**INTRO**—This is probably one of the most well-known and well-loved parables of Jesus.

It is also one of the most misunderstood parables of Jesus.

**What this parable is not...**

- **It is not a fable.** Like Aesop's fables. This is not a biblical story akin to the tortoise and the hare. The story is realistic. It takes place in real places with real people. The Samaritans are real and still exist today. The road to Jericho from Jerusalem is still around and it is desolate in the Judean wilderness.
- **The story is not an allegory.** Each character does not have a meaning. The good Samaritan is not Jesus. The oil and wine are not the sacraments of the church. The Inn is not the Church. The two coins are not the New and Old Testaments.

Like some theologians and Bible students today, Jewish rabbis enjoyed debating the fine points of doctrine; and this lawyer (a student of the OT law) wanted to hear what Jesus had to say.

We get the impression that the man was not seeking truth, but was only trying to involve Jesus in a debate that he hoped he would win. The lawyer proved to be evasive when it came to facing truth honestly and obeying it.

Our greatest responsibility is to obey the greatest of the commandments, which the man quoted accurately from Lev. 19:18 and Deu. 6:5.

But we cannot rightly love God or our neighbor until we have God's love in our hearts (Rom. 5:5; 1Jn. 4:19).

If we cannot keep the greatest of the commandments (Mar. 12:28-34), how can we ever hope to please God?

**Salvation is by faith, not by keeping the law;** but once a person has been saved, he or she can depend on the Spirit to help fill their hearts with love. The Parable of the Good Samaritan was given to answer the evasive question of the lawyer.

"Define your terms!" is an old trick of lawyers and debaters. Instead of getting involved in abstract terms, Jesus presented a concrete case; and the lawyer understood the point.

We must not "spiritualize" this parable and turn it into an allegory of salvation.

**The point is simply that our neighbor is anybody who needs us, anybody whom we can help.**

The "hero" of the story is a Samaritan caring for a Jew;

**The priest and Levite — professional religious workers — are not heroes at all. The question we must answer is not "Who is my neighbor?" but "To whom can I be a neighbor?"**

**Cognitive dissonance – Two conflicting beliefs**

**Jericho is close to the Dead Sea which is (1,280 ft) below sea level.**

**Jerusalem is in the hill country. The route is quite steep and dangerous.**

There were no settlements or towns on the way with lots of caves and hideouts. It's a lot safer today.

- **Blind Bartimaeus was healed there.**
- **And Zacchaeus was saved there.**

Herod beautified the city. So it was not unusual for people to travel there.

**Highway Robbery was common.**

### I. A Man In Distress

#### **A. The condition of this man**

This poor man is attacked, robbed, and stripped. They beat him so he was bloody and bruised.

#### **B. The help that is evaded**

- **A priest walks by** A priest is close to God one would think he would have compassion. But he passes on the other side of the road
- **A Levite walks by** A servant in the Temple. Maybe he will help. He comes and takes a look and then moves on. Probably quickly.

Remember this is a wilderness desert area. If night comes this half dead man will probably die. The Priest doesn't care. The Levite doesn't care.

- **The Samaritan walks by**

We know what the Jews thought of Samaritans. They were looked down upon. They were descendants of Israelites who were left behind after the Assyrians conquered the Northern Kingdom. They had their own subset of Jewish beliefs and their own temple. They allowed their temple to be dedicated to Zeus by the Greeks, unlike the Jews and their temple was actually destroyed by the Jews in the intertestamental period. In 6 AD some Samaritans desecrated the Temple with human bones during Passover. Now we have this parable where the roles are reversed. The bad guys are the Jews. They are the colleagues of the man who started the conversation.

**The good guy is the Samaritan** whom the Jews will travel the long way round to avoid.

### II. The Samaritans Conduct

**He had compassion.**

Everything he gave the man came from his own provisions.

Probably, the cloth he used for bandages came from his own clothes.

The words used here imply lavish care. He was not stingy with his things. When he leaves after staying the night with the man, he gives two days wages to the innkeeper for continued care which equates to between 14 days and 2 months stay at the inn.

Consider picking up an injured man on the side of the road, take him to some cheap motel, take care of him, give the motel owner 2 weeks board and lodging and then ask for an open tab for the man's care. Think how much that will cost. Would you do that?

### **III. The Purpose of the Parable**

**A. The lawyers test** - *And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?*

**So the lawyer wants to know how to get eternal life.**

Jesus asks him about the law.

Jesus commends him for his correct answer.

This is what the LAW demands. And Jesus tells him, do ALL the law demands and you will have eternal life.

The lawyer thinks, do I qualify?

**Luke 10:29** *But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?*

Everyone. Even the hated Samaritans.

**Luke 10:37** *And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.*

### **CONCL –**

The lawyer moves on. No repentance. No eternal life. In contrast with the disciples who have eternal life.

So why did Jesus tell the parable. If you can't have eternal life by keeping the law how do you get it? Now that is the right question.